

## Message Text

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R 061400Z DEC 76

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5107

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS:PINT, IT

SUBJECT:MILAN PROVINCIAL DC CONGRESS (DEC 4&5):

BIG QUESTIONS UNRESOLVED

REF MILAN 2541

SUMMARY. CLAMOROUS MILAN DC PROVINCIAL CONGRESS ENDED 15 YEARS OF LEFT WING CONTROL OF POWERFUL DC PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATION. RESULT WAS THREE-WAY SPLIT ON FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES OF WHAT KIND OF PARTY NEW DC SHOULD BE AND HOW DC SHOULD DEAL WITH COMMUNISTS. WITH CENTER AND RIGHT EMERGING WITH PERCENT OF SEATS. THREE PRINCIPAL POSITIONS WERE TIED CLOSELY TO PERSONALITIES AND OUTLINED IN FREEWHEELING SPEECHES BY MOST OF MILAN PARTY'S BIG GUNS. BOTH LEFT-WING BASE FACTION AND RIGHT WING DE CAROLIS PEOPLE (THEMSELVES SPLIT BY GINO COLOMBO' DEFECTION) TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO WIN OVER MAJORITY CARTELLO GROUP COMPRISING COMMUNIONE E LIBERAZIONE HEAD DEPUTY ANDREA BORRUSO, FORZE NUOVE LEADER DEPUTY GIOVANNI ANDREONI. NEW PROVINCIAL SECRETARY WILL PROBABLY BE CARTELLO CHOICE ROBERTO MAZZOTTA, WHO SPLIT RECENTLY WITH BASE CHIEF MINISTER GIOVANNI MARCORA TO TAKE HARDER LINE AGAINST COOPERATION WITH PCI. OUTCOME REPRESENTS NARROW DEFEAT FOR BASE FACTION WHICH HAS HELD SWAY IN PROVINCE FOR 15 YEARS AND OVERALL SHIFT OF POWER BALANCE TOWARD RIGHT. RESULTS DO NOT, HOWEVER, PROVIDE CLEAR ANSWERS TO PROBLEMS RAISED AND SET STAGE

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INSTEAD FOR ONGOING STRUGGLE WITHIN MILAN PARTY. END SUMMARY.

1 . EXCITED, SOMETIMES ROWDY BUT DEADLY SERIOUS MILAN DC PROVINCIAL CONGRESS ENDED 15 YEAR REIGN OF BASE FACTION WITHIN MILAN PROVINCIAL PARTY PROVINCIAL PARTY APPARATUS AND GAVE MAJORITY WITHIN 51 MEMBER PROVINCIAL PARTY COUNCIL TO THOSE WHO FEEL DC HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH IN PARLIAMENTARY CONCESSIONS TO COMMUNISTS. MAJORITY, HOWEVER, WAS ITSELF SPLIT INTO MODERATES (DE CAROLIS GROUP), THOSE WHO BROKE OFF FROM MODERATES (GINO COLOMBO AND FRIENDS), AND CARTELLO COALITION (C\$L, FORZE NUOVE, AND COLDIRETTI). THUS, THREE GROUPINGS THAT CAME INTO BEING BEFORE NOVEMBER 20-21 MILAN CITY CONGRESS NOT ONLY REMAIN DISTINCT BUT HAVE EXPANDED BY ONE, DESPITE SIGNS BEFOREHAND THAT MODERATES MIGHT INDUCE CARTELLO COALITION TO ACCEPT ITS INTRANSIGENT LINE AGAINST PCI AND DESPITE BASE FACT IN HOPES THAT ITS ERSTWHILE CARTELLO ALLIES MIGHT RETURN TO FOLD.

2. MAIN QUESTIONS BEFORE OVERFLOW CONGRESS WERE TWO. WHAT SHOULD BE NATURE OF "NEW DC" THAT PARTY WAS TRYING TO BUILD (TRADITIONAL, POPULIST PARTY OR DE CAROLIS' AMERICAN-TYPE MASS PARTY)? AND TO WHAT EXTENT IF ANY SHOULD DC COOPERATE WITH PCI IN GOVERNING COUNTRY?

3. BASE POSITION AS OUTLINED BY OUTGOING PROVINCIAL SECRETARY GIANSTEFANO FRIGERIO, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE GIOVANNI MARCORA, AND OTHERS STRESSED DEVOTION TO ZACCAGNINI; NEED FOR DC TO REMAIN POPULIST, CHRISTIAN PARTY; AND IMPOSSIBILITY OF GOVERNING COUNTRY IN CRITICAL PERIOD WITHOUT ASSISTANCE FROM COMMUNISTS. BASE SPEAKERS MADE NUMBER OF APPEALS FOR THEIR TRADITIONAL ALLIES ON DC LEFT, CARTELLO GROUP, TO FORGET DIFFERENCES AND JOIN FORCES AGAIN, AN APPEAL MOST CERTAINLY REPEATED IN BACK ROOMS. DEPUTY BORRUSO, SPEAKING FOR CARTELLO COALITION, REJECTED BASE INVITATION, CITING NEED FOR CLEAR ALTERNATIVE LINE TO PCI. BASE LIST WON 17 SEATS AND 34 PERCENT OF VOTE, DOING BETTER THAN PREDICTED AND ONLY BARELY LOSING RELATIVE MAJORITY.

4. MODERATES, LED BY DE CAROLIS AND DEPUTY SANGALLI, PANNED ZACCAGNINI SECRETARYSHIP, PUSHED MASS PARTY CONCEPT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR DC, AND STUCK TO UNCOMPROMISING STAND ON RELATIONS WITH PCI. GROUP SUFFERED DEFECTION AT OUTSET OF RIGHTIST DC LEADER GINO COLOMBO, WHO ANNOUNCED IN SPEECH THAT MODERATES' LINE WAS NOT ONE HE HAD AGREED TO INITIALLY AND SAID HE WOULD PRESENT OWN LIST ( THUS THERE WERE FOUR LISTS INSTEAD OF THREE). HE ALSO SAID HE WOULD SUPPORT CARTELLO CANDIDATE ROBERTO MAZZOTTA FOR SECRETARY (TO WHOM DE CAROLIS ALSO COMMITTED) REACTION OF DELEGATES INDICATED MOST FELT COLOMBO'S CONTORTIONS WERE JUST MORE

EVIDENCE OF BACKROOM WHEELING AND DEALING OF WHICH HE HAS BEEN ACCUSED

INCREASINGLY OF LATE AND FOR WHICH DE CAROLIS ATTACKED HIM PUBLICLY AFTER MILAN CITY CONGRESS. CARTELLO GROUP, FOR ITS PART, WOULD HAVE NONE OF COLOMBO'S SUPPORT. MODERATES' VOTES WERE PRACTICALLY HALVED BY COLOMBO'S LOSS. MODERATES GOT 9 SEATS AND 17 PERCENT OF VOTE, COLOMBO'S LIST 7 SEATS AND 14 PERCENT.

5. RELATIVE MAJORITY OF DELEGATES' VOTES (18 SEATS AND 35PERCENT) WENT TO CARTELLO COALITION (PRO ZACCAGNINI, IN FAVOR OF KEEPING DC POPULIST PARTY, NO FURTHER CONCESSIONS TO COMMUNISTS BUT REJECTION OF COLLISION COURSE POSITION), WHO DID LESS WELL HOWEVER THAN EXPECTED.

6. CONGRESS' ATMOSPHERICS WORTH REPORTING. AFTER ROUTINE FIRST DAY, HUGE HALL WAS PACKED AN SECOND TO HEAR BIG NAMES. DE CAROLIS, TO WHOM PRACTICALLY EVERY PREVIOUS SPEAKER HAD MADE REFERENCE, WAS FIRST TO COMMAND SILENCE. HIS WAS CLEAR, REASONING, ALMOST DISPASSIONATE ANALYSIS OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN PARTY. MAIN PROBLEM WAS THAT DC COOPERATION WITH PCI IN PARLIAMENT RISKED MASKING FACT THAT COMMUNISTS TRYING TO DESTROY DC ALL OVER COUNTRY. HEAD ON CONFRONTATION HAD ALREADY BEGUN AT PCI INITIATIVE. HIS GROUP'S POSITION WAS CLEAR SO WAS BASE'S. BUT WHAT ABOUT CARTELLO? THAT COALITION NEEDED TO CLARIFY ITS LINE. DE CAROLIS, AS USUAL, SPRIN-LED HIS REMARKS WITH NAMES OF ADVERSARIES, NOT HESITATING TO ADDRESS MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, SITTING TEN FEET AWAY, AS SIMPLY "MARCORA."

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7. FOLLOWING DE CAROLIS AND GIVING MORE THAN ADEQUATE RESPONSE ON CARTELLO'S BEHALF WAS PROBABLE PROVINCIDAZTSECRETART-TO-BE ROBERTO MAZZOTTA. HE ENVIED DE CAROLIS HIS CERTAINTY. HE HIMSELF WAS NOT SO SURE THAT, IF CONFRONTATION DEVELOPED AND NATION'S PROBLEMS REMAINED UNSOLVED, RESULT MIGHT NOT BE DICTATORSHIP, WHETHER OF RIGHT OR LEFT. ACCENT MUST BE PUT ON GETTING COUNTRY BACK IN SHAPE. BUT THAT DID NOT MEAN ACCEPTING HEGEMONY OF COMMUNISTS. REASON HE HAD BROKEN POLITICALLY WITH BASE CHIEF MARCORA, HIS MENTOR OR FIFTEEN YEARS, WAS THAT HE (MAZZOTTA) WOULD NOT ACCEPT HISTORIC COMPROMISE AS INEVITABLE. THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE FOR MAZZOTTA INDICATED LARGE APPROVAL FOR MIDDLE ROAD POSITION HE HAD ELUCIDATED.

8. MARCORA, TOO, HAD RESPONSE READY. IN FIERY SPEECH FROM WHICH HE EMERGED HOARSE AND WHEEZING, MARCORA SEROED IN ON DE CAROLIS. HOW WOULD DC, EVEN WITH ABSOLUTE MAJORITY GOVERNMENT, RULE AGAINST WILL OF PCI AND UNIONS? HOW WOULD DESPERATELY NEEDED LEGISLATION PASS WITHOUT HELP OF COMMUNISTS? HOW MANY TIME HE ROARED AT HIS FORMER UNDERSECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE MAZZOTTA, DID PCI HELP US, BOTH IN ROME AND IN EC TO PASS FARM LEGISLATION? WAS THAT GOOD OR NOT? ASK THE FARMERS\* THOSE WHO SUPPORTED DE CAROLIS' POSITION SHOULD GO ALL THE WAY AND ASK ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT AND LOMBARDY REGIONAL GIUNTA TO RESIGN.

9. ONE EXPLANATION FOR CONGRESS VOTING RESULTS' FAILURE  
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TO SQUARE WITH PREDICTIONS IS THAT CONGRESS WAS PLAYED OUT TO GREAT EXTENT IN HALL. EVIDENCE CONSISTS IN HARD HITTING SPEECHES AND IN EXPLICIT REFUSAL BY BORRUSO DE CAROLIS AND OTHERS TO GIVE ON MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE IN EXCHANGE FOR MORE VOTES. BACK-ROOM ALLIANCES WERE REJECTED FROM PODIUM. WHEN MARCORA TOLD CARTELLO PEOPLE EITHER TO "COME BACK TO US" OR "GO OVER TO DE CAROLIS," VITTORINO COLOKBO DENOUNCED INVITATION AS "OLD WAY OF DOING POLITICS." MOREOVER, ALTHOUGH ATTACKS ON PERSONALITIES ABOUNDED, BASIS OF DEBATE WAS PROFOUNDLY POLITICAL. UNDER THESE CONDITIONS, NOT SURPRISING THAT VOTING RESULTS WERE SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT THAN PROGRAMMED.

19. WHY DID FINAL OUTCOME OF CONGRESS MOVE PRE-CONGRESS WARD RESULTS TOWARD LEFT RATHER THAN RIGHT? ALTHOUGH IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED SPECIFICALLY AMONG DELEGATES WHO SWITCHED FROM CARTELLO TO BASE (MODERATE VOTE WAS SUBSTANTIALLY SAME AS PREDICTED), SOME CHANGE MIGHT BE DUE TO IMPACT OF MARCORA, WHO SPOKE LAST AND WITH GREAT FORCE.

HIS APPEAL TO REALISTIC APPRECIATION OF PCI'S PRESENT  
CRUCIAL ROLE IN COUNTRY AND INDIGNANT REJECTION OF  
ADVERSARIES' ACCUSATION THAT BASE POSITION WAS ONE OF  
SURRENDER.

11. MILAN CONGRESS MARKS BEGINNING OF CAMPAIGN BY DC  
CENTER AND RIGHT TO TURN OUT LEFT THROUGHOUT PARTY  
ORGANIZATION. BASE FACTION HEGEMONY IS OVER IN MILAN.  
MORE MODERATE ELEMENTS MAKE UP THE MAJORITY. IF DE CAROLIS  
AND MAZZOTTA ELEMENTS CAN, OVER THE COMING MONTHS, CONTINUE  
TO COOPERATE AGAINST LEFT, NEW PHASE OF COUNTER WEIGHT  
TO FURTHER CONCESSIONS WILL HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED. WE  
HAVE BEEN INFORMED, AND WILL REPORT SEPTTEL, THAT  
MAZZOTTA AND COMPANY, SUPPORTED AT DISTANCE BY DE CAROLIS  
PEOPLE, HOPE TO CARRY THEIR ACT TO SMALLER PROVINCES  
WITH AIM OF REDUCING BASE POSTION THERE AS WELL. THAT  
EFFORT WILL BEAR WATCHING OVER COMING WEEKS AND MONTHS.

12. PERHAPS MOST SIGNIFICANT RESULT OF MILAN CONGRESS  
IS THAT I CONFIRMS SOME SERIOUS SPLIT IN DC OVER  
COMMUNIST QUESTION THAT PSI AND OTHER PARTIES EXPERIENCING.  
CONGRESS SHOWS THAT, IN MILAN AT LEASE, DC MAJORITY  
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IS COMING DOWN AGAINST FURTHER CONCESSIONS TO PCI.FINA

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## Message Attributes

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